" . . . Almost a rabbi himself"?:
John Lightfoot and the conversion
of the Jews to Christianity

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Statement

This dissertation contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any tertiary institution. To the best of the candidate's knowledge and belief, this dissertation contains no material previously published or written by another person, except when due reference is made within the text of the dissertation.

Robert J. Faser
25 November 1994

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Acknowledgements

In any academic exercise of this nature, there are many people whom the author would be greatly remiss in not thanking. This dissertation is no exception.

I wish to thank Professor Michael Bennett, the adviser for this dissertation, for his many helpful and encouraging comments both on my plan of research and on my drafts of the text. Similarly, I wish to thank Professor Rod Thomson, Dr. Richard Ely, and Dr. Louise Wells for their helpful comments.

I also wish to thank the Rev. Canon Dr. Ivan Head, Warden of Christ College at the University of Tasmania, for making the College's copies of Lightfoot's works available to me for the purposes of this dissertation.

As well, I wish to thank the reference, inter-library loan, and microform staff of the Morris Miller Library of the University of Tasmania for the assistance they provided to my requests for assistance, however incomplete and cryptic the requests sometimes appeared. Similar thanks should be expressed to the reading room and microform staff of the National Library of Australia and to Ms. Kate Skrebutenas of the Speer Library of Princeton Theological Seminary.

Coming from a diverse range of backgrounds, my colleagues in the Master of Humanities seminar in the History of Christianity have made

the three years spent in this programme an exciting and stimulating experience. My thanks to all.

Finally, I wish to thank my wife Rosalie for her support and encouragement during the entire period of my research and writing of this dissertation, particularly for calming me down on the occasion when the entire first draft of the first chapter was devoured by a feral word processor.

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New Town, Tasmania
25 November 1994

List of Abbreviations Used

AAJR   *American Academy for Jewish Research*

DNB   *Dictionary of National Biography*

DUJ   *Durham University Journal*

JEH   *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*

JES   *Journal of European Studies*

JHS   *Jewish Historical Society of England, Transactions,* after 1980 published as *Jewish Historical Studies*

JJS   *Journal of Jewish Studies*

PSB   *Princeton Seminary Bulletin*

Introduction

' . . . [B]y constant reading of the rabbis, [he] became almost a rabbi himself. . . . ': In these words, Edward Gibbon in the eighteenth century described John Lightfoot, a seventeenth century Puritan scholar who taught at Cambridge University.[1] In the seventeenth through early nineteenth centuries, Lightfoot's reputation as a Hebrew scholar was held in high regard, particularly in the area of Talmudic studies.

Paradoxically, Lightfoot, for all his expertise in the language and literature of the Jews, held the Jews and their religion in contempt, as has been forcefully demonstrated by Schertz.[2] Lightfoot expressed a deep hostility toward both the ancient Jews and the Jews contemporary to himself. An area in which he expressed his contempt for and hostility to the Jews[3] most forcefully was in his attitude to attempts to convert Jews to Christianity.

This dissertation will seek to examine Lightfoot's views on the conversion of the Jews to Christianity. In doing so, this dissertation will not attempt to serve as a systematic critique of Lightfoot's Talmudic and rabbinic scholarship. Schertz has already provided such a critique. Neither will this dissertation attempt to provide a systematic evaluation, from a twentieth-century perspective, of Lightfoot's importance in the development of historical-critical methods of studying the scriptures. Such a study has yet to be written and would demand greater space than the specifications of this

dissertation would allow, along with greater technical and linguistic expertise in the disciplines of biblical studies than the author of this dissertation claims to possess. Of necessity, this work will assume a narrower focus on a single, albeit central, aspect of Lightfoot's thought.

The first chapter will place Lightfoot's views in historical context by surveying attitudes regarding the conversion of the Jews to Christianity in seventeenth-century England.[4] Among many English Puritans, particularly during the periods of the Civil War, the Commonwealth and the Protectorate, a growing conviction existed that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent and that the mass conversion of the Jews to Christianity was a necessary prerequisite to the Second Coming.

The second chapter will examine Lightfoot's opposition to attempts to convert Jews to Christianity, as stated in *A Parergon Concerning the Fall of Jerusalem*[5]. In this context, some consideration of Lightfoot's general views regarding Jews and Judaism will also be relevant.

The third chapter will consider the impact of John Calvin's theology upon Lightfoot's views regarding the conversion of the Jews, particularly the doctrines of election and predestination.

In the concluding section, Lightfoot's views on the conversion of the Jews will be evaluated. In this evaluation, the observation will be made that a significant common factor was shared by Lightfoot and by

the advocates of the conversion of the Jews. Neither viewed Judaism as a religion in its own right. Instead, Judaism was viewed as either an under-developed form of Christianity or as a negation of Christianity. It will be the contention of this dissertation that this view of Judaism constituted a significant flaw in the thought both of Lightfoot and of the advocates of the conversion of the Jews.[6]

In this context, the author hopes that the irony (whether intentional or unintentional) of Gibbon's remark will become apparent, that Lightfoot, with his contempt for the Jews and their religion, was never ' . . . almost a rabbi himself.'

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1.   Quoted by T. Hamilton, 'Lightfoot, John', *DNB*, vol. XI, p. 1109.

2.   C.E. Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism in Seventeenth-century England as reflected in the works of John Lightfoot', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, (New York University, 1977), *passim*. Schertz maintains that Lightfoot's scholarly reputation as a Christian interpreter of Jewish literature is undeserved, due to a superficial approach to the Talmudic and rabbinic materials and a tendency to distort the meaning of many passages such as to put Judaism in the worst possible light.

3.   The term "Antisemitism" will be avoided in this dissertation for two reasons. The first is that the word itself is a late-nineteenth century coinage and, thus, an anachronism in a work discussing the seventeenth century. The second is that the term "Antisemitism" refers to prejudice against Jews on ethnic grounds, while the hostility toward the Jews exhibited by Lightfoot and some of his contemporaries was based upon religious grounds.

4.   Due to its nature in establishing the broader historical context of Lightfoot's views (along with the limited scope of this dissertation), the first chapter will exhibit a greater dependence upon secondary sources than later chapters.

5.   Found in J. Lightfoot, *The Harmony, Chronology and Order of the New-Testament* . . . (London, 1655), pp. 175-195, and in *The Works of*

the Reverend and Learned John Lightfoot (London, 1684), vol. 1, pp. 359-377.

6.   The author's own understanding of the relation between Christianity and Judaism involves a tension between two affirmations: (a) that an intimate relation exists between the two religions, due to the Jewish context in which Christianity first developed; and (b) that each of the two religions need to be viewed in its own terms, rather than in terms of the other.   In this light, the author affirms, from his own viewpoint as a Christian clergyman, that Judaism needs to be viewed by Christians as a religion with its own integrity rather than as an under-developed form of Christianity.   Because of the intimate relation between the two religions, the author believes that, while an individual Jew may choose to convert to Christianity (or an individual Christian to Judaism), it is as inappropriate for churches or Christian organisations to seek to convert Jews to Christianity as it is for one Christian denomination to seek to convert members of another denomination to its own type of Christianity.   In this light, the author finds himself in some tension (with the hope that it is a tension of a creative nature) with the views both of Lightfoot, with his contempt for Judaism, and of the advocates of a mission to the Jews.

Chapter 1: Attitudes regarding the conversion of the Jews to Christianity in seventeenth-century England

A growing interest in Judaism

In *A History of the Jews in England*, Cecil Roth stated that 'The religious developments of the seventeenth century brought to its climax an unmistakeable philo-semitic tendency in certain English circles. Puritanism represented above all a return to the Bible, and this automatically represented a more favourable frame of mind toward the people of the Old Testament'[1] The intellectual and social ferment of the seventeenth century in England incorporated a growing interest in Jews and Judaism. This growing interest was found in the context of a nation from which the Jews had been expelled in 1290[2] and in which the only Jews then living were not open about their Judaism, including Marrano refugees from Spain and Portugal.[3]

The growing interest in the Jews had its roots in the Protestant Reformation. With the recovery of serious biblical studies that accompanied the Reformation, a growing interest in the Old Testament led to a growing interest among scholars in the study of Hebrew.[4] In 1540, for example, Regius chairs in Hebrew were established at both Oxford and Cambridge. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, a number of Jewish converts to Christianity were employed as teachers of Hebrew at both universities.[5]

The growing scholarly interest in the Old Testament and in the Hebrew language also led to a more general fascination with Jews and Judaism among English Protestants[6] in the seventeenth century,[7] particularly those of a Puritan frame of mind. This popular fascination took a variety of shapes.

Among many Puritans, a trend in the direction of the adoption of some Jewish religious practices was evident[8]. The verb 'to Judaize' and the noun 'Judaizer' were popularly used in unflattering descriptions of the adoption of these practices. The most obvious of these practices involved the adoption of an austere style of observing Sunday, refraining from amusements as well as from work, that was closer to the Jewish observance of the Sabbath than the traditional Christian observance of Sunday.[9] Some sympathy existed, particularly among some Baptists, with proposals to transfer the Christian day of worship and rest to Saturday to conform with the Jewish Sabbath. Some adopted aspects of Jewish practice regarding diet and dress. A small number of examples, such as that of Hamlet Jackson, are known of Christians who converted to Judaism, generally travelling to Amsterdam to do so.[10]

Another area in which the fascination with Jews was apparent was in the speculation over the identity of the 'lingua humana', the original and perfect human language spoken by all people prior to the confusion of human languages at the Tower of Babel.[11] In England, the majority of those scholars who concerned themselves with the question regarded Hebrew as the 'lingua humana' (although other languages that were

suggested included Latin, Chinese, and Dutch),[12] as well as the language used by God. As Katz put it, 'By the mid-seventeenth century, after much discussion, most Englishmen agreed that God spoke Hebrew.'[13]

As well, there was a growing popular interest in the identity of the 'ten lost tribes' of Israel,[14] the descendants of the Israelites who were taken captive after the conquest of the northern kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.E.[15] While medieval legends spoke of Israelite tribes and nations living in Central Asia, this interest was given further impetus by the European exploration and settlement of the Americas. Speculation as to the origin of the inhabitants of the Americas often led to theories about their possible Israelite origin.[16] In 1644, a Marrano named Antonio de Montezinos, whose Hebrew name was Aaron ha-Levi, described his encounter in the interior of South America with 'Israelites of the tribe of Reuben'.[17] Menasseh ben Israel, an Amsterdam rabbi who figures prominently in the re-admission of the Jews to England, included an account of Montezinos's South American encounters in a book published in 1650 in Spanish (*Esperança De Israel*, Amsterdam), Latin (*Spes Israelis*, Amsterdam), and English (*The Hope of Israel*, London).[18] This book gave Montezinos's accounts of his travels a larger Gentile audience and encouraged a further speculation about the identity of the 'ten lost tribes'.

Millenarianism and the Conversion of the Jews

Most significantly, the growing interest in Jews and Judaism in seventeenth century England was encouraged by the growing influence of Millenarianism among many Puritans. Millenarianism was a belief that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent, to be followed by a period of one thousand years (the 'Millenium', hence the name) during which Christ will personally reign on earth.[19] This belief was based upon the twentieth chapter of the Book of Revelation, which repeatedly refers to a period of one thousand years[20] between the description of the Second Coming of Christ[21] and the description of the Last Judgement of humanity.[22]

Millenarian thought was part of the mainstream of Christian belief during the first four centuries of Christianity. In the fifth century, particularly due to the rejection of Millenarianism by Augustine of Hippo, Millenarianism was pushed to the fringe of Christian thought. Throughout the medieval period, the Church opposed Millenarianism. Similarly, the major Protestant traditions that developed in the sixteenth century (Lutheran, Reformed/Calvinist, Anglican) also rejected Millenarianism, although significant figures in the Anabaptist movement, such as Thomas Müntzer and John of Leyden, were Millenarians.[23] Despite the rejection of Millenarianism by mainstream Calvinism, Millenarianism proved popular among many otherwise Calvinist Puritans in England.

In this context, two factors were seen by Millenarians to be required preconditions for the Second Coming of Christ: the return of the Jews to Palestine and their conversion to Christianity.[24] As Matar suggested, "The more millenarian the theologian, the more he would preach the Jews' return -- since their return and subsequent conversion heralded the kingdom of Christ. The less millenarian the theologian the less he was interested in the Jews and their whereabouts . . . ".[25]

In the *Westminster Directory* or, more properly, *A Directory for the Publique VVorship of God*, approved by the Westminster Assembly of Divines in 1644, Puritan ministers were directed to pray:

> . . . *for the Propagation of the Gospell and Kingdome of Christ to all Nations, for the conversion of the Jewes, the fulnesse of the Gentiles, the fall of Antichrist, and the hastening of the second coming of our Lord; . . .* [26]

The close proximity here between the 'conversion of the Jewes' and 'the fall of Antichrist, and the hastening of the second coming' was no accident. In the minds of many Puritans, there was a close link.

Similarly, there was little doubt in the minds of Puritans as to the identity of the 'Antichrist' for whose 'fall' they prayed. The Roman Papacy was viewed 'with unanimity of opinion' by Puritans as the 'Antichrist' and as 'an embodiment of Satanic power'.[27] For many Puritans, the Jews were perceived as natural allies in what they

viewed as the struggle of Christianity against both the Papal 'Antichrist' and Islam, the traditional enemy of Christianity.[28]

The year 1656 was seen by many Millenarians as a possible date for the Second Coming and the inauguration of the millenium. Two reasons were given for assigning such significance to that year.

On the one hand, 1656 B.C.E. was believed to be the date of the Great Flood[29] using traditional systems of assigning dates to events in the Old Testament narrative. As the Great Flood was the prime example in the Old Testament of an event of universal judgement, it was regarded as a paradigm of the Second Coming, even as early as the New Testament gospels.[30] As a result, 1656 C.E. was suggested by some writers as a possible date for the Second Coming. In 1653, Zachary Crofton wrote, 'There is argument for it, it is analogical, . . . It was in 1656, the flood came on the old world and lasted fourty daies: Ergo in that year 1656, fire must come on this world and last fourty years.'[31]

Similarly, other writers such as the Elizabethan clergyman, Thomas Brightman, based their calculation of the date of the Second Coming by taking a text from the Book of Daniel that declares a period of 1290 days from a time when 'the abomination that maketh desolate [is] set up'[32] until a time of universal judgement. Brightman declared that the 'days' represented 'years', a common practice among both Jewish and Christian apocalyptic writers. Brightman regarded the setting up of 'the abomination that maketh desolate' as the revival of pagan worship

in the Roman Empire under the Emperor Julian (361-363 C.E.). Brightman thought that Julian's pagan revival took place in 360, and so predicted that the Second Coming would take place in 1650.[33] Later writers altered the calculation of Julian's reign to 366, thus adjusting Brightman's prediction to 1656.[34]

As 1656 drew closer, a strong concern developed in regard to the need for the satisfaction of the conditions necessary for the Second Coming to take place. The major condition necessary was for the Jews to be in a position in which they could be reasonably expected to embrace Christianity when the eschatological time was right. This meant that significant numbers of Jews needed to be present in a country where they could be exposed to Christianity (in its Protestant form) practised in a suitably pure manner. In this way, the Jews would develop a sufficiently sympathetic view of Christianity to enable them to convert. To the English Puritan mind, England was obviously the most appropriate choice. Toon summarised the opinion of many Millenarians as believing that, 'If the Jews re-entered Britain *where they would meet some of the godliest people on earth* their conversion to Christ could probably be hastened and the inauguration of the latter-day glory or millenium brought nearer.'[35] Therefore, the readmission of Jews to England became an item on the Millenarian agenda.[36]

Christian Millenarians were not the only people whose eschatological expectations were linked with the readmission of Jews to England. Many Jews also saw the presence of Jews in England as a precondition

for the inauguration of the Messiah's rule. This was based upon the belief that, at the coming of the Messiah, the Jews, who were scattered 'from the one end of the earth even unto the other',[37] would be drawn together 'from the four corners of the earth'.[38] The Hebrew phrase for 'the end of the earth', *Qeseh ha-'ares* was used in the medieval period as the Hebrew name for England, as *Qeseh ha-'ares* was 'an over-literal translation' of *Angleterre*, the French name for England.[39] The eschatological expectations of some Jews and some Christians seemed to converge into an advocacy of the readmission of the Jews to England.[40]

Proposals to Re-admit the Jews to England

During the Civil War, Commonwealth, and Protectorate periods, the readmission of the Jews to England was the subject of a number of publications. For the most part, the conversion of the Jews to Christianity was one of the motives given for the readmission of the Jews.

Roger Williams, known principally as the founder of the Rhode Island colony in New England, wrote (and published anonymously) *The Bloudy Tenet of Persecution* in 1644. Williams declared that:

> *It is the will and command of God . . . [that] a permission*
> *of the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish or Antichristian*
> *consciences and worships, bee granted to all men in all*
> *Nations and Countries: and they are onely to bee fought*
> *against with . . . the Word of God.*[41]

In addition to toleration, conversion was among Williams's motives, as he noted in his comments about the law punishing 'blasphemers of Christ' with death in that the law 'cuts off all hopes from the Jews of partaking in his bloud.'[42]   Shortly after the publication of *The Bloudy Tenet of Persecution*, Williams sailed for North America, before *The Bloudy Tenet of Persecution* was burned by the Common Hangman.[43]

An army chaplain, Hugh Peter, called 'Peters' in some sources, wrote *A Word for the Army and Two Words for the Kingdome* in 1647, in which he suggested that 'strangers, even Jewes [be] admitted to trade & live with us, *that it may not be said we pray for their conversion, with whom we will not converse*, we being all but strangers on the Earth.'[44] Again, conversion was a factor in a proposal for the readmission of the Jews.

After "Pride's Purge" (6-7 December 1648), which reduced the Long Parliament to its Rump, proposals for an 'Agreement of the People' to serve as the constitution of a new, republican England after the execution of Charles I (30 January 1648/9)[45] were referred to various councils dominated by members of the Parliamentary Army.   The Council of War, meeting on 25 December 1648,[46] resolved to recommend to Parliament the toleration, 'of all Religions whatsoever, not excepting Turkes, nor Papists, nor Iewes'.[47]   The Council of Officers, meeting on 15 January 1648/9, altered the provision of religious toleration so that it applied only to those who 'profess faith in God by Jesus Christ'.[48]

The following month, a pamphlet appeared entitled *An Apology for the Honourable Nation of the Jews*, by one 'Edward Nicholas, gentleman'.[49] The identity of 'Nicholas' is not certain, although Samuel speculates that 'Nicholas' may have been the Rev. Henry Jessey, 'an excellent Hebraist'.[50] 'Nicholas' argued that England's tribulations were a punishment by God for its treatment of the Jews, but that, by making amends to the Jews, England could once again hope for God's blessing.[51] 'Nicholas' warned that unless the Jews were readmitted to England, the nation may expect a further judgement from God.[52]

The mission of Menasseh ben Israel, the Whitehall Conference, and the "pamphlet war" of 1655-56

In September 1655, Menasseh ben Israel, the author of *The Hope of Israel*, arrived in London from Amsterdam with a petition to Cromwell asking that the Jews be readmitted to live in England, with permission to conduct public worship. Menasseh[53] brought with him a pamphlet that he had written entitled *To His Highnesse the Lord Protector of the Common-wealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The Humble Addresses of Menasseh ben Israel, a Divine, and Doctor of Physick*. In *The Humble Addresses*, which was widely distributed, Menasseh made the case for the readmission of the Jews to England. Menasseh presented his petition to Cromwell in October 1655.[54]. Cromwell referred the question to the Council of State, who in turn referred the question to a conference of theologians, lawyers, and business leaders, which met in December 1655 at the Council Chamber in Whitehall (and, thus, was known as the Whitehall Conference).[55]

The Whitehall Conference did not come to a straightforward decision to readmit the Jews to England. Instead, the senior judges present pronounced the legal opinion that no law existed preventing Jews from returning to England and that Edward I's expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290 did not forbid any Jew from entering England after that time,[56] a solution described by Johnson as 'a characteristic English muddle'.[57]

In the following months, a number of Marranos living in England openly declared themselves to be Jews, following the seizure of the property of Antonio Rodrigues Robles, a Marrano, as an enemy alien. (England and Spain had been at war since the autumn of 1655.) As no action was taken against the former Marranos, and the confiscated property was returned to Robles, the open presence of Jews in England became once again a reality from May 1656.[58]

As well, the months following the Whitehall Conference saw a flurry of literary activity as people on both sides of the issue of Jewish readmission to England sought to put their case.

The opening volley of this 'pamphlet war' was fired by William Prynne in *A Short Demurrer to the Jewes Long discontinued barred Remitter into England*.[59] Prynne, a Puritan of Presbyterian sympathies, was a lawyer. Throughout his life, Prynne was no stranger to fiery controversy, denouncing Roman Catholics, Laudians, Independents, and Sectarians with similar force. Under Charles I, he had been fined, imprisoned, and suffered the cutting-off of his ears. At the time of

Pride's Purge, he was ejected from the Long Parliament and imprisoned.[60]

Prynne's goal was to create 'a perpetual Barr to the Antichristian Iewes re-admission into England, both in this new-fangled age, & all future Generations . . . '.[61] Prynne sought to create this 'perpetual Barr' by reminding his readers of the grounds upon which the Jews were initially expelled from England in 1290. He repeated charges against the Jews of such economic crimes as usury, forgery, and counterfeiting.[62] He also renewed the charges of ritual murder against the Jews, recycling the medieval legends of William of Norwich (d. 1144) and Little St. Hugh of Lincoln (d. 1255).[63] In the context of building his case against the readmission of the Jews to England, Prynne was dismissive of the possibility of any significant number of Jews converting to Christianity, due to the Jews' 'obstinacy'.[64]

Another tract opposing the readmission of the Jews was *Anglo-Judæus* by 'W.H.'[65] 'W.H.' opposed the readmission of the Jews on a number of grounds. He linked the dispersion of the Jews to what he saw as their responsibility for the crucifixion of Jesus, ' . . . crucifying the Lord of Life, rejecting the Gospel of Salvation, they were spued up by their own land into all Countreys, despised by all, and hated by most.'[66] Like Prynne, 'W.H.' repeated the accusations of economic crimes[67] and the legends of William of Norwich[68] and Little St. Hugh of Lincoln[69]. While 'W.H.' affirmed the desirability and possibility of the conversion of the Jews to Christianity, he denied its probability in the near future, particularly challenging the claim that 1656 was

to be an eschatologically significant year.[70] In fact, 'W.H.' saw possibility of Jews 'perswading Christians to their Religion'.[71]

The opponents of readmission were not alone in 1656 in seeking to put their case before the public in print. As a Jew, Menasseh ben Israel replied to the accusations of Prynne and others in *Vindiciæ Judæorum*, regarded by Katz as Menasseh's 'greatest work . . . [and] one of the most cogent defences of the Jewish people.'[72] As well, Christian defenders of the Jews put their words to print, generally emphasising, among other factors, the possibility of the conversion of the Jews.

An anonymous author identifying himself as 'D.L.' wrote *Israel's Cause and Condition Pleaded*. 'D.L.' rejected the work of writers such as Prynne who retold unreliable legends of ritual murder and, in doing so, ' . . . have raked together all the rabble of Popish Authors . . . to render that Antient and Honourable Nation of the Jews, odious and detestable'.[73] 'D.L.' responded to the charge that the Jews were responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus by reminding his readers that Jesus himself forgave his executioners.[74] 'D.L.' also emphasised the possibility of the Jews' conversion due to the Protestant nature of England.[75]

Another defence of the proposals to readmit Jews to England was made by a Baptist minister, Thomas Collier, in *A Brief Answer to some of the Objections and Demurs Made against the coming in and inhabiting of the Jews in this Common-wealth.*[76] Collier sought to answer objections against the Jews' readmission made both by Prynne and by

'W.H.'. In regard to the claim that the Jews crucified Jesus, Collier replied that the Dispersion of the Jews from their homeland already constituted sufficient punishment for this offence.[77] In reply to the claims of economic crimes and ritual murder, Collier did not seek to dispute these charges, but rather maintained that whole communities should not be punished for the crimes of individuals.[78] Collier also answered the fears expressed by 'W.H.' that Christians may be attracted to convert to Judaism by indicating that such conversions were always rare and never occurred in the case of Christians who were well-grounded in their faith, despite the fact that some Christians in the Netherlands had embraced Judaism.[79] Collier also affirmed the possibility, due to the exemplary nature of the Christianity practised in Puritan England, of large numbers of Jews converting to Christianity if they were admitted to live in England.[80]

By the time that 'D.L.''s and Collier's public defences of the Jews' readmission to England were published, the presence of an open Jewish community in England was a *fait accompli*. Throughout this period, a constant factor in all the proposals to readmit the Jews to England was the possibility and probability of the Jews' conversion to Christianity once they were officially readmitted to live in Protestant England. It is in this context that we examine Lightfoot's denial of the possibility of the conversion of the Jews.

1.   C.Roth, *A History of the Jews in England* (Oxford, 1964), p. 149. It may be questionable how 'automatic' this 'more favourable frame of mind toward the people of the Old Testament' was in the case of Lightfoot.

2.   *Ibid.*, ch. 4, *passim*.

3.   *Marrano* is a term used for a Jew from the Iberian Peninsula who converted to Christianity under duress, but continued to practice Judaism secretly, after the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492 and Portugal in 1497, or a descendant of such a convert.

4.   D.S. Katz, *Philosemitism and the Readmission of the Jews into England* (Oxford, 1982), p. 10; G. Lloyd Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew in Tudor England* (Manchester, 1983), *passim*.   To some extent, according to Katz, the interest in the Old Testament was given additional stimulus by the controversy in the 1520's and 1530's over Henry VIII's divorce from Catherine of Aragon.

5.   Katz, *Philosemitism*, pp. 11-12.

6.   In the seventeenth century, the term 'Protestant' included members of the Church of England, even though many Anglicans today will not use the term 'Protestant' to describe themselves.

7.   In fact, as early as the 1590's, a more favourable view of Judaism was expressed in the writings of such figures as Richard Hooker and Sir Edwin Sandys.   Cf. T.K. Rabb, 'The stirrings of the 1590's and the return of the Jews to England', *JHS* 26 (1979), *passim*.

8.   Katz, *Philosemitism*, ch. 1, *passim*.

9.   Such an austere observance of Sunday eventually was regarded as characteristic and even stereotypical of the Puritan movement as a whole.

10.   Katz, *Philosemitism*, pp. 20-21, 28-30.

11.   Genesis 11:1-9.   It should be noted that all major Christian and Jewish figures of this period regarded all the narratives of the Book of Genesis as literal descriptions of actual events rather than as myths, including the narratives of the Garden of Eden, the Great Flood, and the Tower of Babel.

12.   Katz, *Philosemitism*, ch. 2, *passim*.

13.   *Ibid.*, p. 44.

14.   *Ibid.*, ch. 4, *passim*.

15. This conquest is not to be confused with the similar conquest of the southern kingdom of Judah in 587 B.C.E. by the Babylonians.

In citing dates in the ancient period, this dissertation will follow the convention used by Jewish writers and by a growing number of Christian writers, particularly in the field of Jewish-Christian relations, of using B.C.E. ('Before the Common Era') for dates B.C. and C.E. ('Common Era') for dates A.D. Obviously, this practice will not apply to any direct quotation where the source quoted uses B.C. or A.D.

16. This speculation continued, in North America at least, until the nineteenth century, when it became a major element in the foundational myth of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, commonly known as the Mormons.

17. Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 141.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 143-44, 254.

19. M. Watts, *The Dissenters* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 129-34. Several significant works on Millenarianism in seventeenth-century England were published in the early 1970's, such as B.W. Ball, *A Great Expectation* (London, 1975); B.S. Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men* (Totowa, 1972); C. Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England* (London, 1971); and P. Toon, ed., *Puritans, the Millenium, and the Future of Israel* (Cambridge, 1970).

20. There are six references to 'a thousand years' in Revelation 20:1-7.

21. Revelation 19:11-21.

22. Revelation 20:11-15.

23. Toon, *Puritans*, pp. 8-19.

24. Various passages of the New Testament, such as Revelation 16:12 and Matthew 24:23-31, were used to link the return of the Jews to Palestine with the Second Coming. Cf. N.I. Matar, 'The idea of the restoration of the Jews in English Protestant thought', *DUJ* 78 (1985), pp. 24-25. Similarly, many Christian fundamentalists in the twentieth century have seen the establishment of the nation of Israel as a sign of the imminence of the Second Coming.

25. Matar, 'Restoration of the Jews', p. 28.

26. *A Directory for the Publique Worship of God* (London, 1644), in B. Thompson, ed., *Liturgies of the Western Church* (Cleveland, 1975), p. 360.

27. Toon, *Puritans*, p. 126; cf. also Hill, *Antichrist*, ch. 1, *passim*.

28. Matar, 'Restoration of the Jews', pp. 24-27.

29. Genesis, chs. 6-8.

30. Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27.

31. Z. Crofton, *Bethshemesh Clouded* (London, 1653), pp. 3-4; quoted in D.S. Katz, 'English redemption and Jewish readmission in 1656', *JJS* 34 (1983), p. 75; cf. also Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 89.

32. Daniel 12:11. Please note that any direct quotations from the Bible in this dissertation, unless otherwise stated, will be taken from the Authorised Version, popularly known as the 'King James Version', published in 1611.

33. T. Brightman, *The Revelation of St. John Illustrated, [with] Commentary on . . . Daniel*, (4th ed., London, 1644), *passim*; cited in Katz, *Philosemitism*, pp. 91-91.) The fact that a fourth edition of Brightman's book was published thirty-seven years after his death in 1607 may indicate the level of the influence of his ideas among English Millenarians.

34. Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 98.

35. Toon, *Puritans*, p. 117; italics mine.

36. Non-religious factors in favour of the readmission of the Jews to England, such as the bringing of Jews with expertise in international trade into England, did not figure prominently in seventeenth century arguments for readmitting the Jews to England; cf. E. Samuel, 'The readmission of the Jews to England in 1656, in the context of English economic policy', *JHS*, 31 (1988-1990, p. 153. However, the 'earliest known proposal' for readmitting Jews into the British dominions by Sir Thomas Shirley in 1607 was made with openly economic motives in mind. Cf. E.R. Samuel, 'Sir Thomas Shirley's project for Jewes', *JHS* 24 (1975), pp. 195-197. Sir Thomas Shirley's proposal initially involved the establishment of a Jewish colony in Ireland.

37. Deuteronomy 28:64.

38. Isaiah 11:12.

39. Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 147.

40. Non-eschatological factors also figured in the desire by many Jews to open England up to Jewish settlement, with a major factor being the massive persecution of Jews in the Ukraine during the 1648 rebellion against Polish rule led by Bogdan Chmielnicki, making refugees of many Eastern European Jews and causing Jews throughout Europe to seek the opening up of new lands of refuge. Cf. J.I. Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550-1750* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 120-122; Roth, *History of the Jews in England*, p. 155.

41. R. Williams, The Bloudy Tenet of Persecution (n.p., 1644), p. 86; quoted in Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 172. Williams, in fact, attempted to

put such a principle of toleration into practice in the Rhode Island colony.

42. Williams, *Bloudy Tenet*, p. 171; quoted in Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 172.

43. Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 173; Roth, *History of the Jews in England*, p. 151.

44. H. Peter, *A Word for the Armie and Two Words for the Kingdome* (London, 1647), p. 11; quoted in Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 174; italics mine. Peter, the son of a Protestant refugee from Flanders, later served as chaplain to Cromwell's Council of State. He was executed in October, 1660, for his active advocacy of the execution of Charles I. Cf. R.P. Stearns, *The Strenuous Puritan: Hugh Peter 1598-1660* (Urbana, 1954), *passim*.

45. During this period, the calendar year began on 25 March. When dates between 1 January and 24 March are mentioned in this dissertation, the year will be cited with reference to both dates.

46. The Puritans generally did not observe Christmas Day as a holiday.

47. Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 177.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

49. *Ibid..*

50. Samuel, 'Readmission', pp. 154-55. Katz does not speculate regarding the identity of 'Nicholas', but identifies Jessey in another context as a prominent Baptist minister of 'Saturday-Sabbatarian' sympathies, 'a powerful advocate of Jewish readmission . . . [and] the author of the most reliable eyewitness narrative of the Whitehall Conference in which the formal resettlement of the Jews in England was debated.'; Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 32. Johnson, without giving any reason, speculates that 'Nicholas' was Menasseh ben Israel; P. Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York, 1987), p. 276.

51. Roth, *History of the Jews in England*, p. 153.

52. Katz, *Philosemitism*, pp. 181-82.

53. In Hebrew, *ben Israel* is not a surname, but a patronymic, meaning 'son of Israel'. In this way, it is similar to Russian patronymics such as *Ivanovich*. Other writers dealing with this period tend to refer to Menasseh by his given name alone.

54. Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 199; Roth, *History of the Jews in England*, p. 161.

55. Katz, *Philosemitism*, pp. 202-206; Roth, *History of the Jews in England*, pp. 161-63.

56. Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 213; Roth, *History of the Jews in England*, pp. 162-63.

57. Johnson, *History of the Jews*, p. 277.

58. Katz, *Philosemitism*, pp. 235-238; Roth, *History of the Jews in England*, pp. 164-66.

59. W. Prynne, *A Short Demurrer* (London, 1656); cf. Katz, *Philosemitism*, pp. 220-223, 255.

60. M. Wilensky, 'The literary controversy in 1656 concerning the return of the Jews to England', *AAJR* 20 (1951), pp. 359-360.

61. Prynne, *A Short Demurrer*, p. ii, quoted in Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 221.

62. Wilensky, 'Literary controversy', p. 364.

63. Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 222. The legend of ritual murder involves the accusation that the Jewish observance of the Passover involves the murder, sometimes by crucifixion, of a Christian, often a child. The death of William of Norwich in 1144 is regarded as the beginning of the charges of ritual murder. Cf. D. Cohn-Sherbok, *The Crucified Jew* (London, 1992), pp. 43-45; E.H. Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* (New York, 1964), pp. 98-101; Johnson, *History of the Jews*, pp. 208-210.

64. Prynne, *A Short Demurrer*, pp. 90ff, as cited by Wilensky, 'Literary controversy', p. 368.

65. W.H., *Anglo-Judæus* (London, 1656). A number of writers have indicated that 'W.H.' may have been William Hughes, a lawyer; cf. Katz, 'English redemption', p. 80; Wilensky, 'Literary controversy', p 370n.

66. W.H., *Anglo-Judæus*, p. 3.

67. *Ibid., passim.*

68. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

70. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-52.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

72. Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 237; cf. also Samuel, 'Readmission', p. 164.

73. D.L., *Israel's Cause and Condition Pleaded* (London, 1656), p. 2; as cited in Katz, 'English Redemption', p. 80. Later writers, in criticising the ritual murder legends, have also mentioned the 'popery' of the age in which they originated. For example, Increase Mather, an early president of Harvard College, expressed his scepticism of the 'hydeous' legends of ritual murder due to their origin in 'dark and

Popish times'; cf. I. Mather, *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation* (London, 1669), p. 175.

74.   D.L., *Israel's Cause and Condition Pleaded*, pp. 56-59; as cited in Wilensky, 'Literary controversy', p. 383.

75.   D.L., *Israel's Cause and Condition Pleaded*, pp. 8-9; as cited in Wilensky, 'Literary controversy', p. 381.

76.   Thomas Collier, *A Brief Answer* (London, 1656); cited by Katz, 'English Redemption', p. 79; Katz, *Philosemitism*, p. 238; Wilensky, 'Literary controversy', pp. 386-393.

77.   Wilensky, 'Literary controversy', pp. 387-388.

78.   *Ibid.*, pp. 391-392.

79.   *Ibid.*, pp. 389-390

80.   *Ibid.*

Chapter 2: John Lightfoot's views on the conversion of the Jews to Christianity

Lightfoot in his context

While Lightfoot himself was not an active participant in the debates over Jewish readmission to England,[1] he wrote on the subject of the conversion of the Jews. Lightfoot's one work that treats this subject most directly, the *Parergon Concerning the Fall of Jerusalem*, written as an 'additionall discourse' to his *Harmony, Chronology and Order of the New-Testament*,[2] was published in 1655 at a time when the conversion of the Jews to Christianity was closely linked in the minds of many people with the readmission of the Jews to England. An introductory section to the *Harmony, Chronology and Order of the New Testament* addressed by Lightfoot 'To the Reader' was dated August 28th 1654,[3] over a year before Menasseh ben Israel's visit to England but still at a time when the conversion of the Jews had been a subject firmly in the mind of many people in England.

Lightfoot, the son of a clergyman, was born in Stoke-upon-Trent in 1602.[4] After his education at Cambridge, Lightfoot was ordained to the ministry of the Church of England. He served as rector of a number of parishes, including Ashley, Staffordshire (1630-42), St. Bartholomew's-behind-the-Exchange, London (briefly during 1642-1643), and Great Munden, Hertfordshire (1643 until his death in 1675). Within the context of the Church of England of his day, Lightfoot was a Puritan, albeit not a radical Puritan in terms of theology, church

government, or civil government.   Among the members of the
Westminster Assembly of Divines, Lightfoot was identified as one of
the more conservative Presbyterians, arguing against the involvement
of lay elders in deciding religious questions and against the popular
election of parish ministers.   Lightfoot was appointed Master of
St. Catherine's Hall at Cambridge in 1650, admitted to the degree of
Doctor of Divinity in 1652, and became Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge
University in 1654.   At the Restoration, Lightfoot retained the
mastership of St. Catherine's Hall and the living of Great Munden.   He
was appointed to a prebend at Ely Cathedral in 1667.

It was as a biblical scholar and a Hebraist that Lightfoot was most
highly regarded.   After his formal university study and his
ordination, he began his studies in Hebrew and Aramaic during his
first curacy.   Over the years, Lightfoot developed a wide familiarity
with the Talmud[5] and with other rabbinic literature.   Lightfoot was a
prolific writer, with most of his major works focusing upon the
application of Talmudic scholarship to the study of the New Testament.
These major works included *The Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the
Four Evangelists* (1644, 1647, 1650) and *The Harmony, Chronology, and
Order of the New Testament* (1655), along with a series of Latin
studies, *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ* (from 1658), applying his Talmudic
studies to the study of particular New Testament passages.[6]   During
his lifetime and through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,
Lightfoot was held in high regard as a scholar, so that Hamilton in
his biography of Lightfoot in the *Dictionary of National Biography*
stated that 'Lightfoot holds a very high rank among Hebrew

scholars. . . . . To him is ascribed the credit of opening to the modern world "the fountains of Talmudical learning".[7]

A twentieth century study of Lightfoot's work, however, particularly one conducted in the light of the growing theological dialogue between Jews and Christians, would reveal some real concerns with the content of Lightfoot's work. Chaim E. Schertz, in his 1977 Ph.D. dissertation for New York University, has provided the single late twentieth century study of Lightfoot. Schertz has taken the view that Lightfoot "does not belong in the tradition either of modern Biblical criticism or within the best tradition of Humanist scholarship".[8] While Lightfoot had a comprehensive grasp of the Hebrew and Aramaic languages and of post-biblical Jewish literature, he did not grasp the dynamic character and historical evolution of post-biblical Jewish life and institutions.[9] Lightfoot, therefore, tended to take a descriptive rather than an analytical approach to the Jewish literature.[10] Often in his writings, according to Schertz, Lightfoot tended to present the Jews in the worst possible light, even if it meant distorting Jewish texts.[11] For example, Lightfoot described the Jewish view of Paradise as one that emphasised physical and sensual pleasures, even though his only source for this interpretation was a passage from Maimonides in which this view of a physical, sensual paradise was presented as a parody of Islamic teaching.[12]

Lightfoot often used what he regarded as the failings of the Jews as a means of criticising, either directly or indirectly, comparable behaviours on the part of other Christian groups, such as Roman

Catholics and various Protestant sectarian groups.[13] For example, Lightfoot drew a parallel between his interpretation of the Jewish view of Paradise and the earthly paradise awaited by Millenarian sects.[14] (This theme will be developed further in the next chapter.)

Lightfoot's *The Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New Testament* and the *Parergon Concerning the Fall of Jerusalem* (1655)

Lightfoot published *The Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New Testament* in 1655, following his *The Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the Four Evangelists*. The main purpose of *The Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New Testament* seems to be to place the events described in the New Testament into a single, coherent narrative and to relate this narrative to its context within the secular history of the first century C.E. In seeking to place the New Testament within the context of its secular history, Lightfoot states that the New Testament was completed by 66 C.E.[15] The majority of New Testament scholars today would give a much later date for the completion of the New Testament.[16]

In *The Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New Testament*, Lightfoot was critical of the Millenarian tendencies of many of his contemporaries. In his introduction "to the reader", he indicated his concern with avoiding the excesses of Millenarianism.:

> . . . I was unwilling to have medled with The Revelation, partly because I have no mind to be bold in things of that nature (I see too much daring with that Book already) and

partly, because I could not go along with the common stating
of the times and matters there: . . . .[17]

The *Parergon Concerning the Fall of Jerusalem* (hereafter the *Parergon*)
was written to bring the narrative of *The Harmony, Chronology, and
Order of the New Testament* beyond Lightfoot's assumed date of 66 C.E.
for the completion of the New Testament. The principal thrust of the
Parergon was to relate Lightfoot's view of the major events and
movements among the Jews in the years immediately after the
completion of the New Testament.

The introduction and the first two sections of the *Parergon* were
concerned with the destruction by the Romans of the city of Jerusalem
and the Temple, and the impact of the fall of the capital upon the
outlying areas.[18]

The third through eighth sections of the *Parergon* were concerned with
the reconstruction of Jewish life by the sessions of the Sanhedrin
meeting at Jabneh (or *Jamnia*) and in other places.[19] Through the
work of the rabbis of Jabneh and their successors, Judaism was
radically transformed from a religion based upon a system of
sacrifices made by hereditary priests in a temple to one based upon
ethics and scholarship, whose central religious figures were teachers
rather than priests.[20] Lightfoot appeared to minimalise the extent of
the changes in religious practice and belief taking place with the
emergence of post-biblical rabbinic Judaism at Jabneh. For example,
Lightfoot reduced to a few anecdotes the role of even so significant a

figure within post-biblical Judaism as Gamaliel, whom he dismissed as 'a very busie man'.[21] Lightfoot's minimalisation of the changes within Judaism that took place during this period is one obvious example of Lightfoot's failure, as cited by Schertz, to appreciate the dynamic character of Judaism.[22]

The ninth section of the *Parergon* is concerned with the "posture and temper" of the Jewish people.[23] It is in this section that Lightfoot's polemical stance begins to become apparent, as he describes the developing attitude of the Jews in regard to Christianity. Within this section, Lightfoot describes the Jews using terms such as 'reprobation' and 'perdition'.[24] In this context, Lightfoot speaks of the Jews' 'derision and destestation' and 'hatred and mischievousness' against Christians, their 'blasphemy' against the name of Christ, and the way in which they 'oppose, vilifie, and blasphem the Gospel'.[25]

The tenth section of the *Parergon* is concerned with the question of the Jewish impact upon Christianity or, as phrased by Lightfoot, 'How far the Jews in the first generation of Christianity might infect or infest it'.[26] Lightfoot indicated his belief that Jewish influences were the sources of many heretical movements within Christianity, such as the allegorising of the scriptures and the belief in justification by works.[27] In this section, Lightfoot used the term 'Antichrist' to describe the Jews. In this context, Lightfoot maintained that there was a twofold 'Antichrist': Judaism and the Papacy. Lightfoot wrote that:

> . . . the Jews . . . were the first part of Antichrist, the
> *mistery of iniquity* . . . . [and] the other part of the
> *mistery of iniquity* the Papal Antichrist arose at Babylon in
> the West: And so these two parts make one intire body of
> Antichrist, and as the latter took at the first to do the
> work that they had done, to deface the truth and oppose it,
> and that under the colour of religion, ...[28]

Lightfoot's concept of the Jews as 'Antichrist' will be further developed at a later stage in this chapter.

The eleventh section of the *Parergon* attempted to reassure the reader that the Jews did not transmit a corrupted text of the Old Testament to the Christian Church.[29]

Lightfoot on the conversion of the Jews

The twelfth and final section of the *Parergon*, 'Concerning the Calling of the Jews', dealt with the question of the conversion of the Jews to Christianity.[30] Here Lightfoot expressed his belief that the mass of Jews were spiritually unable to respond positively to the Christian message. Because of this, Lightfoot was sceptical about attempts to convert the Jews to Christianity.

> The same blindness, the same doting upon traditions, the
> same insisting upon their own works for salvation, the same
> blind confidence that they are God's only beloved people, the
> same expectation of *Messias* to come, the same hatred of
> *Messias* already come, and the same opposition against the
> Gospel is in them still, that was in that first generation

that crucified the Lord of life. That generation is plainly and often asserted by the Holy Ghost in the New Testament to be *Antichrist*, and the very same *Antichristian* spirit hath continued in all the generations of them, ever since, even to this day.

Into the thoughts therefore concerning their Calling after so long and so extream crosness against the Gospel and the Lord of it, I cannot but take these things into consideration. [For though I am unwilling to recede from that charitable opinion of most Christians that there shall be a Calling of them home, yet see I not how that suppposal of the universal Call of the whole Nation, as of one man, which some entertain, can be digested without some allay and mitigation.][31]

In four numbered paragraphs, Lightfoot stated his principal reasons for his scepticism in regard to the conversion of the Jews:

(1)   Lightfoot's first reason was that the Jews repeatedly had been given the opportunity to embrace Christianity, both in the first century C.E. and since. This opportunity had been comprehensively rejected by the majority of the Jewish people. Lightfoot found it difficult to believe that a mass conversion of the Jews to Christianity would be possible, given the previous history of rejection: 'Now that their refusing of the Gospel so offered to them, in that manner as they have done, should be followed with so universal a Call and Conversion, is somewhat hard to believe: . . . '.[32]

(2)   Secondly, Lightfoot described the Jews during the period of the Old Testament as living within 'a twofold Covenant', *i.e.* a 'Covenant of Grace' and a 'Covenant of Peculiarity'. While Lightfoot did not define these terms, he described both Covenants as initiatives of God. The context indicated that Lightfoot regarded the 'Covenant of Grace' as the forgiveness of the sins of the people and the 'Covenant of Peculiarity' as the status of the Jews as the 'chosen people' of God. Lightfoot maintained that, from the time of Jesus, the Christian religion simultaneously extended the 'Covenant of Grace' to the Gentiles and negated the 'Covenant of Pecularity' for the Jews. Thus there was no reason to expect a mass conversion of the Jews to Christianity.[33]

(3)   Thirdly, Lightfoot noted the comparatively small number of Jews (as opposed to members of 'the Heathen') who embraced Christianity since the first century C.E., even though 'they [the Jews] have had incomparably more means and opportunity then ever those ['the Heathen'] had . . . '.[34] In that context Lightfoot indicated that the role of the Jewish leadership in the crucifixion of Jesus had a detrimental effect upon the receptivity of the Jews of his day to Christianity: 'Their sin that cast them off, was more horrid then the sin that cast off the Heathen, and so their blindness and obduration is beyond theirs.'[35]

(4)   Fourthly, Lightfoot developed his description of the Jews, both those of the first century C.E. and those of his own day, as 'Antichrist', and, therefore, particularly impervious to attempts to

convert them to Christianity.[36]   (This theme will be developed more
fully in the next section of this chapter.)

The remainder of this chapter will examine more closely two principal
aspects of Lightfoot's thought regarding the conversion of the Jews:
Lightfoot's description of the Jews as 'Antichrist', and Lightfoot's use
of language of 'election' in relation to the Jews.

Lightfoot's description of the Jews as 'Antichrist'

It has already been noted in this chapter that Lightfoot saw the
'Antichrist' as existing in a twofold form: Roman and Jewish.
Lightfoot described the prospect of the conversion of the Jews to
Christianity as 'the conversion of a brood of Antichrist' to the extent
that Lightfoot could say that, ' . . . Therefore can I no more look for
the general calling of them, then I look for a general call of the
Antichristian brood of Rome'.[37]   While Lightfoot's views on Roman
Catholicism reflected the predominant opinion of English Protestants
of his day, his view of the Jews as 'Antichrist' was not a common one.

The concept of 'Antichrist' as used by English Protestants in the
seventeenth century is derived from three images from the New
Testament: the 'Antichrist', the 'Man of Sin', and 'the Beast'.[38] The
term 'Antichrist' occurs in the Bible only in the letters of John.[39]
However, many Reformation-era biblical interpreters associated the
term 'Antichrist' with the figure of the 'man of sin' in the Second
Letter to the Thessalonians[40] and with the figure in the Book of

Revelation described as 'the beast',[41] which was seen as a source of persecution for the Christian church.

Among English Protestants during the early seventeenth century, the term 'Antichrist' (and its derived adjective 'antichristian') was almost universally associated with Roman Catholicism and, particularly, the institution of the papacy.[42] During this period, the terms 'Antichrist' and 'antichristian' began to be used among Puritans of an Independent orientation to refer as well to the episcopacy of the Church of England and their adherents.[43]

Lightfoot, however, was not representative of the main currents of English Protestant thought in his era in his identification of the Jews as 'Antichrist'. The use of the term 'Antichrist' in regard to the Jews was rare among Protestants, although some Roman Catholic writers promoted the idea of a Jewish 'Antichrist'.[44] One Protestant writer, however, who described the Jews as 'Antichrist' was William Prynne, who used this terminology in his arguments against the readmission of the Jews to England.[45]

Because Lightfoot regarded the Jews as 'Antichrist', he saw their destiny in terms of their destruction, not in terms of conversion to Christianity. Lightfoot declared that both the Jewish 'Antichrist' and the Roman 'Antichrist' awaited the same destruction:

> . . . Antichrist is yet in being and strong, and his end will be, not by conversion, but perdition. So can I not but conceive of the Jewish Nation, That although numerous

multitudes of them may at the last be brought into the Gospel as the Protestant party hath been, yet to that end numerous multitudes also shall continue in the Antichristian spirit of unbelief and opposition and blaspheming: and both parts of Antichrist, the Roman and the Jewish, so to perish together.[46]

Lightfoot on the 'elect' of the Jews and the 'elect' of the Gentiles

Given Lightfoot's scepticism about the possibility of a general conversion of the Jews to Christianity and his description of the Jews *en masse* as 'Antichrist', it may seem paradoxical that Lightfoot also spoke of the probability of the conversion to Christianity of a select group of Jews. However, in the closing section of the *Parergon*, Lightfoot also expressed his belief that some of the Jews will convert to Christianity. Lightfoot affirmed that the existence of a group of Jews, whom he described as 'many', who 'belong to Election and the Covenant of Grace' was 'not to be doubted'[47]

In commenting upon the eleventh chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans[48], Lightfoot needed to deal with statements and terminology that often were used by Christians to affirm a future general conversion of the Jews to Christianity. These included a reference to the conversion of the 'fulness' of the Jews[49] and the statement that 'all Israel shall be saved'.[50]

Lightfoot stated his belief that Paul's reference to the 'fulness' of the Jews was not a reference to the totality of the Jewish people, but

rather a reference to the 'fulness' of those who were the 'elect' among the Jews. As Lightfoot expressed it:

> By their *fulness* not meaning the whole number of their Nation, but the full number of God's Elect of them when they should be brought in. The casting off of the Nation inriched the Gentiles, in that they came to be the Lords people in their stead, but how much more shall it be an inriching to them when the full number of them that belong to God shall come in also and be joyned to the Gentiles, and held to make their body up.[51]

Lightfoot believed that the 'elect' of both the Jews and the Gentiles make up a single people, that '[t]he Covenant of Grace . . . belongs to all the seed of Christ, before the Law, under it, and after it, Jews and Gentiles . . . . , since under the Gospel there is no distinction of Jew and Gentile.'[52] Thus, Lightfoot affirmed that 'the Gentiles and the Jews that belong to the election of grace, do make up but one Body.'[53] Lightfoot therefore interprets Paul's statement that 'all Israel shall be saved' to refer to that portion of the Jewish people who were members of the 'elect'.

By introducing the language of 'election' into the question of the conversion of the Jews, Lightfoot provides an indication of the influence of the theology of John Calvin upon his own thinking. The next chapter will consider the influence of Calvin's theology upon that of Lightfoot.

1. Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism', p. 39.

2. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, unnumbered title page; *Works*, vol. 1, unnumbered page following p. 147. Please note that in vol. 1 of Lightfoot's *Works*, there are ten unnumbered pages in the introductory sections of the *Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New Testament*. The numbered page immediately prior to this section is p. 147, while the numbered page immediately following this section is p. 201.

3. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, unnumbered page prior to p. 1; *Works*, vol. 1, unnumbered page prior to p. 201.

4. The biographical details in this section are based upon the information found in Hamilton's article on Lightfoot in *DNB*, vol. 9, pp. 1108-1110; and in the biographical articles by George Bright and John Strype in the 1684 collection of Lightfoot's *Works*, vol. 1, pp. I-XXXIX.

5. The Talmud, in its Jerusalem and Babylonian versions, is the authoritative compilation of post-biblical Jewish religious teaching.

6. These works are all found in the 1684 edition of Lightfoot's *Works*.

7. Hamilton, 'Lightfoot, John', *DNB*, vol. 9, p. 1109.

8. Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism', p. 13.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 265.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

11. *Ibid., passim.*

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 244-245. In this context of Lightfoot presenting the Jews in the worst possible light, there seems however, to be no evidence of his repeating medieval legends of ritual murder, but Lightfoot's main interest was in earlier historical periods than medieval England.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 13. This practice was also used by John Calvin. Many of Calvin's references to the Jews, both positive and negative, were made in the context of Calvin attacking his theological opponents (Anabaptists, Roman Catholics) within Christianity. Cf. M.S. Laver, 'Calvin, Jews, and Intra-Christian Polemics', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1988, *passim*, as abstracted in *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 49:5 (November 1988), pp. 1106-1107/A.

14. Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism', p. 246.

15.   Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, pp. 153-174; *Works*, vol. 1, pp. 340-358.

16.   The majority of New Testament scholars today maintain that the letters of Paul were the earliest New Testament documents to be written, with Paul's death occuring during the persecution of Christians in Rome under Nero in 64 C.E., but with some of the letters traditionally attributed to Paul (*i.e.* Ephesians, 1st and 2nd Timothy, Titus) written at a later time by other authors. The gospels were written from c. 70 C.E. (the date of the destruction of Jerusalem) to c. 100 C.E., with Mark being the earliest and John the latest of the gospels to be written.   Cf. H.C. Kee and F.W. Young, *The Living World of the New Testament* (London, 1960), *passim*; R.A. Spivey and D.M. Smith, Jr., *Anatomy of the New Testament* (London, 1969), *passim*.   A minority view, maintaining that the New Testament was completed by 70 C.E., was put forward by Bishop J.A.T. Robinson in *Redating the New Testament* (London, 1976), *passim*.

17.   Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, unnumbered page in the section prior to p. 1; *Works*, vol. 1, unnumbered page in the section following p. 147.   Please note that direct quotations from Lightfoot will be cited (unless otherwise stated) in the form found in the 1684 version of his *Works* rather than from *The Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New Testament*. This is due principally to the fact that the copy of *The Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New Testament* in the library of Christ College is more fragile than the copy of the *Works*, so that the copy of *The Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New Testament* could not, in the author's opinion, hold up under the sort of sustained use required for this dissertation.   Some minor modernisation of Lightfoot's spelling had already taken place by the publication of the *Works* in 1684.

18.   Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, pp. 175-182; *Works*, vol. 1, pp. 359-364.

19.   Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, pp. 182-188; *Works*, vol. 1, pp. 365-370.

20.   Johnson, *History of the Jews*, pp. 147-168.

21.   Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, pp. 183-184; *Works*, vol. 1, pp. 365-366.   Lightfoot summarised Gamaliel's role in the shaping of rabbinic Judaism with the dismissive comment, 'There is exceeding much mention of this Gamaliel in the Talmuds, and he is a very busie man there: . . . '.   (*Harmony, Chronology*, p. 183; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 366.)

22.   Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism', p. 265.

23.   Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 188 (plus lost pages); *Works*, vol. 1, pp. 370-372.

24.   Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. 1, p. 370.

25.   *Ibid*, p. 371.

26. *Ibid*, pp. 372-373.

27. *Ibid*, p. 372.

28. *Ibid*, p. 373.

29. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 193 (plus missing pages); *Works*, vol. 1, pp. 373-375.

30. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, pp. 193-195; *Works*, vol. 1, pp. 375-377.

31. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 194; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 375. Over fifty years later, Increase Mather said that Lightfoot did not 'so much deny as doubt of a General Conversion of the Jewish Nation'. Cf. I. Mather, *A Dissertation Concerning the Future Conversion of the Jewish Nation* (London: 1709), p. 9. In the opinion of the author, Mather may have been putting an overly generous interpretation on Lightfoot's views.

32. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 194; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 376.

33. *Ibid*.

34. *Ibid*.

35. *Ibid*.

36. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 194-195; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 376.

37. *Ibid*.

38. Hill, *Antichrist*, pp. 3-4.

39. 1st John 2:18, 2:22, 4:3; 2nd John 7.

40. 2nd Thessalonians 2:3-9.

41. Revelation 13:11-18. According to Hill, the use of the word 'beast' in this specialised religious context led to the emergence of the use of the word 'animal' in common English usage in the early seventeenth century. Cf. Hill, *Antichrist*, p. 40.

42. M. Van Beek, *An Enquiry into Puritan Vocabulary* (Groningen, 1969), p. 38; Hill, *Antichrist*, ch. 1, *passim*.

43. Van Beek, *Puritan Vocabulary*, *loc. cit.*; Hill, *Antichrist*, ch. 2, *passim*.

44. Hill, *Antichrist*, pp. 178-180.

45. Prynne, *Short Demurrer*, pp. 73, 115, 126; as cited in Hill, *Antichrist*, p. 180.

46. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 195; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 376.

47. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 194; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 376.

48. The ninth through eleventh chapters of the Letter to the Romans contain Paul's most systematic treatment of the relationship between Christians and Jews.

49. Romans 11:12.

50. Romans 11:26.

51. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 195; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 377.

52. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 194; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 376.

53. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 195; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 377.

Chapter 3: The impact of a Calvinist theological position on Lightfoot's views regarding the conversion of the Jews

The Calvinistic ethos of seventeenth-century Puritanism

The Puritan movement in seventeenth century England was dependent upon the theology of John Calvin and the religious and civil reforms developed by Calvin in Geneva in the sixteenth century.[1] As Lightfoot was a conservative Puritan of a Presbyterian orientation, it is appropriate to explore the extent of Calvin's theological influence upon Lightfoot's views on the conversion of the Jews to Christianity.[2]

On one hand, it needs to be noted that no direct citations of Calvin have been located in the works of Lightfoot that were surveyed in the preparation of this dissertation. On the other hand, Lightfoot's theology (like the theology of the mass of the Puritan movement) was formed in the context of a basically Calvinist ethos. Two observations need to be made in regard to this lack of direct citations of Calvin by Lightfoot.

The first observation is that Lightfoot wrote as a specialist scholar in a field (the Jewish background to Christianity) in which Calvin was not a specialist. Thus, one would not normally expect the lack of such citations to be, in itself, indicative of any lack of influence by Calvin upon Lightfoot's thought.

The second observation relates to the way in which Calvin was used as a theological authority in this period. While many Puritans cited Calvin as an authority on theological matters, Calvin was not treated as an infallible authority. Other reformers in the Swiss tradition were cited with equal respect, while significant figures from the early centuries of Christianity were given greater weight.[3]

The seventeenth century saw a lessening of Calvin's influence among Puritans of the Independent (or Congregationalist) tradition. Stearns indicated that 'the Congregationalists, though they revered Calvin as a "great man of God", scarcely accepted his teachings as the final interpretation of scripture.'[4] Puritans in the Independent tradition tended to modify Calvin's theology, including his doctrine of predestination, and to cite Calvin less frequently as a theological authority. One example of the modification of Calvin's theology by many Puritans in the seventeenth century was seen in the rejection of Calvin's equation of prosperity with God's favour (and poverty with God's disfavour) in some circles during the Civil War period.[5]

Although Lightfoot did not directly cite Calvin as a source in his writings in regard to the conversion of the Jews, Lightfoot's theological language includes terms such as 'election' that are associated with the theology of Calvin. Given the relevant chronological position of Calvin living in the sixteenth century and Lightfoot in the seventeenth, and also given the broadly (albeit modified) Calvinistic ethos of seventeenth century English Puritanism,

one may safely assume that Calvin's thought functioned as an influence upon that of Lightfoot.

A shared lack of contact with actual Jews

Before the theological parallels between Calvin and Lightfoot are considered, one non-theological area of similarity between them needs to be mentioned. This is the fact that both Calvin and Lightfoot lacked any significant personal contact with living Jews.

S.W. Baron began a chapter on 'John Calvin and the Jews' with the statement that 'Unlike Martin Luther and most other German reformers, John Calvin had few, if any, contacts with contemporary Jews.'[6] At the time of Calvin's birth in Noyon in 1509, the Jews had been expelled from France for over one hundred years. At the time of Calvin's first arrival in Geneva as a refugee in 1536, the Jews had been expelled from the city for forty-five years.[7]

In the case of Lightfoot, the only group of Jews living in England during most of his lifetime (until 1656) was the small, secretive community of Marrano refugees from Spain and Portugal. In 1675, Lightfoot was appointed by Cambridge University to supervise a project of a Jewish scholar, Rabbi Isaac Abendana, to translate the *Mishnah* into Latin.[8] According to Schertz, 'There is no indication that Lightfoot had any meaningful relationship with any other Jews.'[9]

Both Calvin and Lightfoot spent the majority of their lives in societies that were Jewless, both officially and, for the most part, in fact. A possible result of this situation was that each tended to convey in their writings an attitude in which they each seemed to regard the Jews as a theoretical category rather than as a community of living people.

Calvin's inconsistent attitude toward the Jews

One significant factor in the references to the Jews in Calvin's writings is a marked inconsistency in his expressed attitudes toward the Jews. In particular, this inconsistency took the form of a certain confusion in terms of his understanding of the Jews' status before God. Calvin was capable both of condemning the Jews for their rejection of Christianity and of affirming a belief that the Jews enjoyed a unique and favoured position in the sight of God. An example of this inconsistency can be seen in a single paragraph in *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin's systematic presentation of his theology:

> . . . *For they are, so to speak, like the first-born in God's household. Accordingly, this honor was to be given to them until they refused what was offered, and by their ungratefulness caused it to be transferred to the Gentiles. Yet, despite the great obstinacy with which they continue to wage war agains the gospel, we must not despise them, while we consider that, for the sake of the promise, God's blessing still rests among them.* . . . [10]

According to Baron, Calvin exhibited a more generally favourable view of the Jews in *The Institutes*, the first edition of which was written early in his life, than in his later commentaries on the scriptures, in which a much harsher tone in regard to the Jews is evident.[11] An example of this harsher tone can be seen in Calvin's comment upon a passage from Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians:[12]

> *He puts the whole blame upon them [the Jews]; for it was because of their blindness that they were unable to benefit from the teaching of the law. . . .*
>
> *He now gives the reason for their continued blindness in the midst of light. The law in itself is a source of light; but we enjoy its brightness only when Christ appears to us in it. The Jews do all they can to turn their eyes away from Christ; it is therefore not surprising that they see nothing, since they will not turn to the Sun. This blindness on the part of God's chosen people, especially since it has lasted so long, should warn us that we ought to rely upon God's favors toward us, and not be lifted up with pride. . . .*[13]

Calvin demonstrated an essentially inconsistent attiude toward the Jews. For Calvin, the inconsistency was expressed in his uncertainty in regard to the Jews' status before God.

Use of references to the Jews as a critique of other Christians

Both Calvin and Lightfoot have often used references to the Jews in their writings as a critique of the failings of their fellow-

Christians. In Calvin's writings, as well, references to the virtues of the Jews were used as positive examples for Christians.

In the case of Lightfoot, his references to what he saw as the failings of the Jews frequently included a critique of what he saw as related failings on the part of other Christians: Roman Catholics, Baptists, Millenarians, etc. Schertz described this practice as typical of Lightfoot, in that his ' . . . analysis of Jewish society was intended to serve as a model and a moral lesson to those factions within English society which had assumed corrupt Jewish tendencies, primarily the Roman Catholics and the Enthusiasts.''[14]

An example of this practice can be seen in Lightfoot's criticism of what he regarded as the Jewish view of Paradise. On the basis of a misinterpretation of passages in Maimonides, Lightfoot mistakenly described the Jewish view of Paradise as one focusing upon sensual pleasures.[15] On the basis of this distortion of Jewish beliefs, Lightfoot condemned what he saw as a similar failing on the part of his Millenarian contemporaries in England, whom he regarded as using the vision of an earthly Paradise as a means of justifying the overthrow of the established order of society.[16]

Lightfoot's use of the Jews as an example to his fellow-Christians can be one possible explanation for the seeming contradiction between Lightfoot's intellectual fascination with the Jewish people and the level of contempt that he expressed toward the Jews in his writings.[17] One would naturally expect that a person who devoted his life's work

to the study of any community of people would develop an affinity or at least a respect, however grudging, with the community that was the object of his study. This affinity and respect was absent in Lightfoot's attitudes toward the Jews.[18] If, however, Lightfoot regarded the Jews principally as a source of negative moral and religious examples for his Christian contemporaries, this contradiction becomes more understandable.

As well, Lightfoot's use of the Jews as a teaching aid to correct the failings of his fellow-Christians was an echo, albeit a crude echo, of Calvin's practice. The references to Jews in Calvin's writings were, according to Laver, 'rarely used to recommend attitudes or actions to be adopted toward Jews . . . . [but were intended] to defend "sound doctrine" against the errors of Calvin's Christian contemporaries on the theological left and right.'[19] Whether the image of Judaism used was a positive or negative image depended upon the theological context. When arguing against Roman Catholics and what he saw as their 'works righteousness' or their 'blind imitation of antiquity',[20] Calvin presented similar characteristics on the part of the Jews. On the other hand when arguing against the more theologically innovative Anabaptists, Calvin was equally capable of using positive references to Jewish historical figures or religious traditions.[21] In this context, Engel described Calvin as distinguishing between a minority (or 'remnant') of faithful Jews and a majority of unfaithful Jews:

> If "our fathers", "the Jews", understood as the faithful remnant, are a positive example for all contemporary Christians (and especially for Reformed or evangelical

Christians), "our fathers", "the Jews", understood as the
unfaithful majority, are a negative example for all
contemporary Christians (and especially for the "papists").[22]

While Lightfoot's references to the Jews and their religious practices
were uniformly negative, as opposed to the mixture of positive and
negative references in Calvin's writings, both had a similar purpose
in presenting either positive or negative 'role models' for their
fellow-Christians.

The doctrine of election and predestination in regard to the Jews

The most significant parallel, however, between the thought of Calvin
and that of Lightfoot can be seen in the application of Calvin's
doctrine of election and predestination in regard to the Jews.

Calvin's doctrine of election and predestination, which itself is
dependent upon Augustine of Hippo, asserts that God has decided from
the foundation of the world that some people (the 'elect') are chosen
('elected', or 'adopted') for salvation and others for damnation, with
no human effort being able to alter God's decision. Calvin described
this decision as:

> *. . . God's eternal decree, by which he compacted with*
> *himself what he willed to become of each man. For all are*
> *not created in equal condition; rather eternal life is*
> *foreordained for some, eternal damnation for others.*
> *Therefore, as any man has been created to one or the other*
> *ends, we speak of him as predestined to life or to death.*[23]

In addition to teaching God's election of individuals, Calvin also taught that God elected the Jews as a nation. This election was of a similar nature to the election that he taught was enjoyed by Christians. In his commentary on a passage from the Old Testament book of Malachi,[24] Calvin spoke of God's free choice of the Jews:

> . . . . *The Jews were continually warned not to look for the reason for their adoption elsewhere than in God's free favor. He had seen fit to choose them; this alone was the source of their security.*

> . . . . *God's grace is the more striking when he out of all mankind chooses some few to be his own people. . . . Those whom he honors with such an election he binds to himself with a most holy chain; and if they desert him, there is no excuse whatever for their treachery.*

> . . . . *We are not descendants of Abraham or of Jacob, according to the flesh; but God has given us sure evidence of his adoption, which singles us out from other peoples whom we in no way excel. Clearly, then, if we do not respond to God's call, we are found no less guilty than the Jews.*[25]

Calvin taught that among the Jews, as in any nation, an 'elect' existed. It was this 'elect' only that Calvin regarded as within the scope of God's concern. In commenting on a passage in the Letter to the Romans in which Paul asserted that ' . . . they are not all Israel, which are of Israel'[26], Calvin interpreted this passage as indicating the existence of an 'elect' among the Jews:

> . . . *To be brief, when the whole people is called the inheritance, and peculiar people of God. it is meant they are*

adopted of the Lord, the promise of salvation being offered
unto them, and confirmed by the seal of circumcision. But
because many of them refuse that adoption by their
ingratitude, and therefore enjoy not the benefit thereof,
hence ariseth among them another difference, whilst the
fulfilling of the promise is respected. Lest, therefore, it
should seem wonderful unto any, that the fulfilling of the
promise appeareth not in many of the Jews, Paul denieth them
to have been comprehended in the true election of God.[27]

Similarly Calvin used the term 'Israel' to speak of the whole, 'elect'
people of God, whether Jews of Gentiles. In his commentary on the
passage in the Letter to the Romans in which Paul declared that 'all
Israel shall be saved'[28], Calvin offered the explanation that 'all
Israel' was a reference to both 'elect' Jews and 'elect' Gentiles:

. . . Many understood this of the people of the Jews, as
though Paul said that religion should be restored again
amongst them as before; but I extend the name of Israel unto
all the people of God, . . . and so the salvation of the whole
Israel of God shall be fulfilled; . . . . [Paul] calleth the
Church, consisting together of Jews and Gentiles, the Israel
of God . . . . [29]

Calvin spoke of the 'elect', whether Jews or Gentiles, as the 'whole
Israel of God', constituting a single people which Engel characterises
as "the one church of God's elect".[30] Calvin, rather jarringly, often
tended to use the Christian term 'church' within a Jewish context. For
example, Calvin discussed in the *Institutes* whether 'the true church'
continued to exist in ancient Israel during periods of idolatry.[31] For

Calvin, a single 'elect' people of God, a single 'church', incorporating both 'elect' Jews and 'elect' Gentiles, has existed throughout history.

It is in this theological context that Lightfoot's language about the 'elect' of the Jews should be considered.[32] Lightfoot described Paul's reference to the 'fulness' of the Jews[33] not as referring to ' . . . the whole number of their Nation, but the full number of Gods Elect of them when they should be brought in.'[34] This description is fully consistent with Calvin's belief that among the Jews, as in any nation, only the 'elect' were seen as proper objects of God's salvation. Similarly, Lightfoot's comment that ' . . . the Gentiles and the Jews that belong to the Covenant of Grace, do make up but one Body'[35] should be seen in the context of Calvin's belief that the 'elect' of both the Jews and the Gentiles make up a single 'church'.

To consider the impact of Calvin's theology upon Lightfoot's views on the conversion of the Jews, we need to consider the weight that a Calvinist would place upon the permanence of 'election'. To a rigidly Calvinistic theological mind, such as Lightfoot's, any effort put into the process of evangelising people who were not 'elect' was, at best, wasted effort and, at worst, a presumptious attempt to alter 'God's eternal decree'. Thus, the proclamation of many of Lightfoot's contemporaries, as 1656 approached, that the mass conversion of the Jews to Christianity was imminent was met with scepticism by Lightfoot.

This scepticism on Lightfoot's part was dependent upon the theological foundation left by John Calvin. From a Calvinist perpective, Lightfoot would have neither expected nor desired the mass conversion of any nation, whether the Jews or anyone else, to Christianity. Instead, his expectation would have focused upon the conversion of the 'elect' within the nation. In this way, Lightfoot was more of a consistent Calvinist in his views regarding the conversion of the Jews than were many of his millenarian contemporaries, whose theology was also formed in a Calvinistic context.

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1. According to J.T. McNeill, in *The History and Character of Calvinism*, (London, 1967), chapter 19, *passim*, the theology of Calvin and other Swiss and South German reformers such as Zwingli, Bullinger and Bucer had set the tone in theology (if not liturgy and polity) for the Church of England from the accession of Elizabeth I until the ascendancy of an Arminian theology in the Church of England, due to the influence of Archbishop William Laud, in the 1630's. The Puritan movement sought to expand the Calvinist influence in areas of liturgy and polity while continuing (and intensifying) the basically Calvinist tone of English Protestant theology. Cf. also P. Collinson, 'England and International Calvinism, 1558-1640', in M. Prestwich, ed., *International Calvinism, 1541-1715* (Oxford, 1986), chapter 7 *passim*.

2. The influence of Calvin upon Lightfoot's thought is neglected by Schertz in his otherwise definitive study of Lightfoot's attitudes regarding the Jews. In the opinion of this author, this omission is the only serious shortcoming in Schertz's study of Lightfoot. Cf. Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism', *passim*.

3. Collinson, 'England and International Calvinism', in Prestwich, *International Calvinism* p. 214..

4. Stearns, *Strenuous Puritan*, p. 48.

5. L.F. Solt, *Saints in Arms* (Stanford, London, 1959), p. 90.

6. S.W. Baron, *Ancient and Medieval Jewish History*, (New Brunswick, 1972), p. 338.

7. *Ibid.*; T.H.L. Parker, *John Calvin*, (Berkhamsted, 1977), pp. 2, 61–63; M.P. Engel, 'Calvin and the Jews: a textual puzzle', *PSB*, supplementary issue 1 (1990), p. 121. The Jews were expelled from France in 1394 and from Geneva in 1491.

8. Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism', pp. 40–41; D.S. Katz, 'The Abendana Brothers and the Christian Hebraists of Seventeenth–Century England', *JEH*, 40:1 (January 1989), pp. 37–43. The *Mishnah* is a collection of ancient oral traditions commenting upon the *Torah*, compiled during the first and second centuries C.E.; cf. Johnson, *History of the Jews*, pp. 152–153.

9. Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism', p. 41.

10. J. Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.16.14, (Philadelphia, 1960), p. 1337.

11. Baron, *Ancient and Medieval*, p. 344; S.W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, v. 13, (New York, 1969), pp. 286–287.

12. 2 Corinthians 3:14–17.

13. J. Calvin, *Commentaries*, (London, 1958), p.111.

14. Schertz 'Christian Hebraism', p. 13.

15. *Supra*, p. 27; Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism', pp. 244–245.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

17. *Supra*, ch. 2, *passim*.

18. One of Lightfoot's early biographers, however, hinted at the possibility of the existence of such an affinity when he referred to Lightfoot's 'beloved Rabbies', and then corrected himself by indicating that he referred 'rather to the beloved Writings of the ill-beloved Authors'. Cf. J. Strype, 'An Appendix to the Author's Life', in Lightfoot, *Works*, vol. 1, p. XIII.

19. Laver, 'Calvin, Jews, and intra-Christian polemics', *loc. cit.*.

20. *Ibid.*

21. As well, Laver (*Ibid.*) indicates that Calvin used strongly positive images of the people of Israel in pastoral wrtings addressed to Protestant communities under persecution in France.

22. Engel, 'Calvin and the Jews', pp. 116–117.

23. Calvin, *Institutes* 3.21.5, p. 928. It is difficult to locate a precise distinction between election and predestination in Calvin's thought and in the thought of later Calvinist theologians, other than that the term 'election' seems to focus upon God's choice of the elect, while the term 'predestination' seems to focus upon the link between

election and salvation, encouraging a belief that salvation was a certainty for the elect and an impossibility for the non-elect. Cf. F.L. Cross, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (London, 1958), pp. 443-444, 1098-1099.

24. Malachi 1:2-6.

25. Calvin, *Commentaries*, p. 291.

26. Romans 9:6.

27. J. Calvin, *Commentary upon the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans*, (Edinburgh, 1844), p. 251, emphasis mine.

28. Romans 11:26.

29. Calvin, *Commentary upon Romans*, p. 330.

30. Engel, 'Calvin and the Jews', pp. 108-115, term used on p. 108.

31. Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.11.7-8, pp. 1048-1049.

32. *Supra*, pp. 35-36.

33. Romans 11:12.

34. Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 195; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 377.

35. *Ibid.*

Conclusions

In assessing Lightfoot's views on the conversion of the Jews, in comparison with the views of many of his contemporaries, one would seem to find two diametrically opposed positions. On the one hand, we find the millenarian 'philosemites', whose warmth and welcome toward the Jews was generally grounded in a belief that the mass conversion of the Jews to Christianity was both imminent and a necessary precondition to the second coming of Christ.

On the other hand, we find Lightfoot's scepticism toward any attempt to convert the Jews to Christianity, a scepticism that was grounded both in a strict application of John Calvin's doctrine of election and predestination' and in a strongly-expressed hostility to the Jewish people and a contempt for their religion. This hostility and contempt was aptly described by Schertz, who closed his study of Lightfoot, by asserting that, ' . . . in their struggle to gain re-admittance into England, the Jews could not automatically rely upon the support of those who ostensibly knew most about them. A leading Hebraic scholar was no less hostile and prejudicial to their cause than an ignorant peasant ignited by the flames of superstition and fear.' [2]

Despite their obvious differences of opinion in regard to Judaism, both Lightfoot and the 'philosemites' shared one significant common assumption in regard to Judaism. Both Lightfoot and the 'philosemites' were interested in post-biblical Judaism only to the

extent that each regarded Judaism as relevant to Christianity, rather
than as a religious tradition with its own internal integrity.

The 'philosemites' regarded the Jews as potential Christians. They
believed that the main factor preventing the mass conversion of Jews
to Christianity was the lack of suitable Christian role models for
Jews to observe and emulate, rather than any religious or communal
factors within Judaism that continued to exercise a hold upon the
loyalties of the Jewish people. They believed that Jewish migration
from Roman Catholic lands (such as Spain and Portugal) to Protestant
lands (such as England) would bring Jews into contact with
sufficiently appropriate role models of Christian belief and practice
so as to facilitate their rapid conversion.[3]

Lightfoot, on the other hand, saw post-biblical Judaism as a negation
of Christianity. This negation was seen in his use of the terms
'antichrist' to speak of the Jews, a usage that he did not share with
many of his Protestant contemporaries.[4] Lightfoot's distortions of
post-biblical Judaism can be seen as following this view of post-
biblical Judaism as a mere negation of Christianity. Factors in post-
biblical Judaism that did not fit this view were given little
emphasis. For example, the significance of Gamaliel in the shaping of
post-biblical Judaism was dismissed with the comment 'There is
exceeding much mention of this Gamaliel in the Talmuds, and he is a
very busie man there: . . . '.[5] Given Lightfoot's distortion of post-
biblical Judaism, the irony, whether intentional or unintentional, of

Gibbon's comment about Lightfoot being 'almost a rabbi himself'[16] can be appreciated.

While Lightfoot's hostility to post-biblical Judaism and the fascination with Judaism exhibited by the 'philosemites' seemed to be in opposition to each other, there was a significant shared factor in both viewpoints. Lightfoot's view of Judaism as a negation of Christianity and the view of the 'philosemites' of the Jews as potential Christians both had the impact of creating a christianised 'lens' through which Judaism was viewed selectively. In short, neither Lightfoot nor his 'philosemitic' contemporaries were prepared to view Judaism in Jewish, rather than in Christian, terms.

The period during which Lightfoot was active was a time of change for the Jews of Western Europe. In the late seventeenth century, Jewish communities in Western Europe were beginning to emerge from their marginalised existence in the ghettos into a fuller participation in mainstream commercial and cultural life. Jonathan Israel described this process as a function of secularisation, resulting from 'the weakening of Christian allegiance in the west in the aftermath of the Wars of Religion . . . '[17]

Following the destruction caused by religious conflicts such as the Civil War in England and the Thirty Years' War in Germany, a growing revulsion toward religious fanaticism and intolerance resulted among a growing and influential section of the population of Europe.[18] The reaction against the years of sectarian warfare, coupled with the rise

of scientific and secular world views, led to a growing tolerance for people with consciously non-Christian viewpoints, for, in Israel's words, 'a proliferating assortment of sceptics, Jehovanists, deists, and other anti-Trinitarians and non-Christians of every hue.'[9] In influential circles, a growing interest developed in the philososphy, ethics, and spirituality of Islam, Confucianism, and other non-western religious traditions,[10] with a frequent result being an attitude that religious beliefs were essentially relative. In this context, Jews were able to benefit from the development of such an increasingly open society.

While the increased tolerance for Jews could generally be regarded as a function of the lessening of the influence of the Christian churches and their doctrines, we need to look to a later age to find examples of believing and practising Christians who demonstrated a positive appreciation of Jews *as Jews*, rather than as potential Christians.

Lightfoot, with his breadth (if not depth) of studies in Judaism, could have been an early example of such a Christian. The tragedy of Lightfoot's work is this missed opportunity that it represents.

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1. *Supra*, pp. 45-48.

2. Schertz, 'Christian Hebraism', p. 267.

3. *Supra*, ch. 1, *passim*.

4.   *Supra*, pp. 33-34.

5.   Lightfoot, *Harmony, Chronology*, p. 183; *Works*, vol. 1, p. 366; cf. also *Supra.*, pp. 29, 37 (note 19).

6.   *Supra.*, pp. 4-6.

7.   Israel, *European Jewry* (1989), p. 267; cf. also J. Edwards, *The Jews in Christian Europe* (London, 1988), pp. 97-98.

8.   T.K. Rabb, *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1975), pp. 80-82, 116-145; G.R. Cragg, *The Church and the Age of Reason* (Harmondsworth, 1970), *passim*, J. McManners, 'Enlightenment: Secular and Christian', in J. McManners, ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, (Oxford, 1992), *passim*. Rabb described the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the Clarendon Code, and similar governmental measures to promote religious uniformity in the late seventeenth century as a 'last flurry of intolerance' (p. 82).

9.   J. Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism*, , (Oxford, 1985), p. 258. Israel seems to have omitted this reference in the second edition of his work, although he continued to give credit to a growing secularism for the expanded social role enjoyed by Jews in Western Europe during this period.

10.   P. Hazard, *The European Mind, 1680-1715* (Harmondsworth, 1973), pp. 26-40; D.A. Pailin, *Attitudes to Other Religions: comparative religion in seventeenth and eighteenth century Britain* (Manchester, 1984), *passim*.

Bibliography

A Preliminary Note on Bibliographical Sources

Regarding primary sources, the works by Lightfoot are held in the collection of Christ College, Hobart. Lightfoot's *Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New-Testament . . .* included a 'Parergon Concerning the Fall of Jerusalem and the Condition of the Jews in that Land after', described as an 'Additionall Discourse' on the title page of the *Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New-Testament . . . .* The 'Parergon' is my principal primary source for examining Lightfoot's views regarding the conversion of the Jews to Christianity. In the copy held by Christ College, four pages of text within the "Parergon" (pages 189 through 192) are missing.

The two-volume *The Works of the Reverend and Learned John Lightfoot, D.D.*, edited by George Bright, is a collection of Lightfoot's major works compiled after his death. Volume 1 contains, *inter alia*, the *Harmony, Chronology, and Order of the New-Testament*, including the 'Parergon' in its entirity. Biographical material found in Volume 1 includes an anonymous Life of Lightfoot, which Schertz attributes to Bright, and an Appendix to Lightfoot's Life by John Strype. Sermons, discourses, and commentaries on particular biblical passages ('Horæ Hebraicæ and Talmudicæ') are found in Volume 2.

Regarding secondary sources, the only recent secondary study of Lightfoot is the 1978 doctoral dissertation from New York University by Chaim E. Schertz entitled 'Christian Hebraism in Seventeenth-century England as reflected in the works of John Lightfoot'. Schertz, writing from a Jewish perspective, has provided a thorough critique of Lightfoot's views on Judaism.

Regarding the immediate historical context of the debates over the readmission of the Jews to England, the most useful works were two works by David S. Katz, *i.e.* the book *Philosemitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England 1603 – 1655* and the article 'English Redemption and Jewish Readmission in 1656', along with articles by N.I. Matar and M. Wilensky.

Other secondary sources were useful for background in areas of Jewish history (such as Cecil Roth's classic *The History of the Jews in England*), seventeenth-century British history (such as the cluster of books written in the early 1970's on aspects of Millenarianism by Bryan W. Ball, B.S. Capp, Christopher Hill, and Peter Toon), and Calvinist theology.

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> (Vol. 1 is described as "Revised and Corrected by George Bright, D.D., . . . [and] printed by W. R. for Robert Scot in Little-Britain, Thomas Basset in Fleet-Street, Richard Chiswell in St. Paul's Church-yard, and John Wright on Ludgate-Hill." Vol. 2 is described as "Published by the Care and Industry of John Strype, M.A., . . . [and] printed by Richard Rawlings, for Richard Chiswell at the Rose and Crown, in St. Paul's Church-Yard.")

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